College Activities

Trinity College First & Third Boat Club

Andrey Karailiev (2016)

Michaelmas always brings with it a lot of excitement. Most of the Club has been away from Cambridge, the river, and rowing as a whole for the better part of three months and is anxious to get back out before the weather turns too cold. Not only that, but Michaelmas brings with it the start of a novice term where we look to anyone interested in the sport, and take them from tubs to coastal IVs to VIIIs,



NM1, all in Minion attire, proudly taking a photo after a victorious row.



After their 4th bump and blades, W2 row back home with nothing but joy.

as they become ever more experienced. The gargantuan task, with one of the largest programmes in Cambridge, would not be possible without the hard work of the Vice-Captain, Novice Captain, and even alumni who come in to lend their expertise – most notably Neil Talbott, who this year as in previous years has been instrumental in the programme.

And it would not be a novice term without phenomenal results as well. Our NM1 managed to beat rounds of competition to come out on top at Emma Sprints, a costumed regatta event for novice crews. Most impressively, for a second year in a row, our NM2 was the fastest second novice men's boat at Novice Fairbairns, with a similar success in the lower divisions for our NM4 as the fastest of its category. The novice Women's side, though not winning anything, was at its largest in recent years and came just shy of snatching victory in several events throughout the term.

The Senior side, with crews changing as they always do after the summer break, had a fantastic start to term as well, with several second places for both M1 and W1 in Autumn Head, the first race of term. Performance in Senior Fairbairns, the most important race of term, was equally even between the two sides with M1 15th overall and W1 12th. M2, however, displayed remarkable results, coming in as the fourth M2 at Autumn head, the sixth M2 at Winter Head (beating several M1s), and fourth-fastest M2 in the Fairbairn Cup.

Lent begins, as it has for the past several years, with an off-Cam training camp in what was meant to be sunny Seville, though the weather left much to be desired for this year. Despite this, three full crews (24 rowers, three coxes) went out at least twice daily, battling through the unexpected cold to get in much-needed mileage out on the Guadalquivir. Around the training, we managed to go out and explore Seville for its history and, given the hunger built up from rowing, its food. The week culminated in racing against Jesus, who had arrived a few days before we were due to leave, and with a good mix of wins and losses between both colleges as we raced repeatedly. Term, and racing back on the Cam, now awaited.

Lent Term saw three crews on each side, and fresh coaches for M2 and W2, to great effect. Unfortunately, it was also a term marred by heavy rain and wind; prohibitive conditions that saw the Lent Bumps reduced to top divisions only, leaving M1, W1, and M2 the only crews racing. All in all, it was a Bumps of ups and downs, with both W1 and M2 finishing level despite managing to secure precious few bumps on the crews ahead. M1, despite coming so close to Clare M1 that the Black Prince stern skipped over Clare's bow, saw their Lent's end with a result of down one. It was clear that all in the Club had to come together, recoup, and make a move forward in the following term.

Easter Term always comes with a struggle, where exams and rowing commitments have to find some balance, but despite this we still managed to put out the same number of boats we had in Lent Term. As always, crews saw changes, and M1 found itself with four impressive first-years in the boat –eager, promising, and thirsty to improve. It was an unfortunate circumstance of fate that saw them, thanks to a combination of injury and illness, need subs for three out of the four days of May Bumps, and going down four to drop out of the first division – which has already put plans into motion for success and reversal in the next year. M2, despite being a boat of just seven rowers, steadily improved over term until Bumps finally came and then managed to fill their empty seat. A fast Jesus crew behind them on the first day was bound to be a challenge, but they proved their focus on following days by managing to row over twice (one of those despite an almost boat-stopping moment at the start of the race), and then secured a bump on Downing to maintain the highest position they have had for years. M3, without a permanent coach and cox at the start of term, was a crew of true spirit. They took the challenge term was going to be head on and came out of it with a result of down three, but with a positivity and joy in the boat perhaps exceeding any other.



W1 grinning after four successful days of Bumps: the second FaT crew to get blades these Mays.

But this was really a term for the Women's Side in particular to shine, with W2 managing to bring home win after win as they truly came together; their list of victories include the Radegund Mile, Champ's Head, and of course a marvellous up four (Blades!) in the Mays. Not wanting to be outdone, W1 put in every effort and matched their performance, giving the Women's Side a second set of Blades and a real cause to celebrate for the entire Club at BCD. Although W3 ultimately did not get on to Bumps, their very existence was a victory (in recent memory) for the Club, and a true indicator of our growing and ever stronger Women's side.

With much of the Club due to return next year, and rumour has it they are training hard over the summer, there is no doubt in my mind that 2024–25 will see a string of victories for both Sides.